TOLWORTH SCHOOL
Happy children, successful learners

Tolworth School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Infant Reading Policy (EYFS & KS1)

Governors' Committee / Responsible Member of Staff	Delegated from Quality of Education Committee to Literacy Leaders / Senior Leadership Team
Status	Voluntary
Review Cycle	Annual
Policy last updated	September 2024
Date of next review	September 2025

Tolworth School Reading Policy (Infants)
2024-25

At Tolworth School we provide a language rich environment where we introduce children to books as a source of pleasure and knowledge that will continue throughout life. We strive to foster a love of books and of reading from children's entry to our school. . A wide range of fiction and non-fiction books are available to the children in their classrooms as well as in the library and library bus. Children have access to a wide range of genres: fiction and non-fiction, including; stories, poems, plays, dictionaries, encyclopaedias and non-fiction topic books. Children will listen to a range of texts being read and learn to read, with increasing fluency, accuracy and understanding. Texts that are read to the children are carefully chosen to ensure they are stimulating and imaginative relating either to children's own experience or to extending their knowledge and vocabulary. We recognise that speaking and listening skills are vital to early reading development and they are integral to the teaching of phonic knowledge and application.

Phonics is recommended as the first strategy that children should be taught in helping them learn to read. It runs alongside other teaching methods such as 'guided reading' and 'shared reading' to help children develop all the vital reading skills.

At Tolworth School we follow the validated SSP phonic programme 'Essential Letters and Sounds' when teaching reading. This Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme teaches children how to read through the decoding and blending. The ELS lessons have a four part structure and teaching sequence (review, teach, practise, apply) which promotes independence, resilience and success in all our learners. ELS teaches children the link between the sounds of our language (phonemes) and the written representation of these sounds (graphemes), or the spelling of the sounds contained within the English language. Whole class teaching allows all children to access Quality First Teaching and interventions are provided for those children who need more practice and support.

Children will read fully decodable books in phonics lessons so that they can directly apply their new knowledge and phonic skills at an appropriate level. Books that are taken home are closely matched to each child's individual phonic knowledge. Classrooms are well resourced with phonic working walls and resources which are readily available, empowering children to independently make correct spelling choices.

Phonic Phases

Phase I This is taught and practised throughout the Nursery year (and into Reception when required). It consists of seven aspects: **environmental, instrumental, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and oral blending and segmenting.**

Throughout the Early Years we provide the children with a range of opportunities to experience a wide variety of carefully chosen texts. Nursery children are immersed in phase 1 phonics, there is a real focus of sharing a range of books, talking about them and discussing the stories and characters so that the children develop a real understanding of text, develop vocabulary and a love of books and stories. In Reception, we consolidate and build upon the early reading skills taught in Nursery and we begin to teach Systematic, synthetic phonics as well as other key skills necessary for a child to achieve the expected level at the end of their Reception year.

Essential Letters and Sounds consist of five phases which are delivered from Reception to Year 1.

Phase Two - This phase is taught as soon as the children are settled in Reception (first two weeks). The purpose of Phase Two is to move from oral blending and segmenting to blending and segmenting with graphemes (written phonemes). The children will learn 19 letters and should be able to read and write words with three sounds e.g. cat, tip, rock. The children also learn 12 HRS words (hard to read and spell words)

Phase Three – This phase is taught in Reception. The children will learn 25 more sounds including digraphs (two letters that make one sound e.g. sh) and trigraphs (three letters that make one sound e.g. air). The children will continue to practise how to blend and segment along with learning to read and write two syllable words. The children also begin to learn the letter names. Children should have learnt all 44 phonemes and graphemes by the end of Spring term in Reception.

Phase Four – This is taught in Reception in the summer term. The purpose of Phase Four is to practise children's knowledge of sounds and to read and spell words with adjacent consonants that contain four sounds e.g. skip, boost, float. Children who are ready will be introduced to Phase Five sounds in the last half term of Reception.

Phase Five - This begins in the first few weeks of Year One. Children will learn alternative ways of spelling sounds e.g. 'oi' in coin and 'oy' in boy. Children will practise spelling a range of two and three syllable words phonetically. Children should be ready for Phase Six by the time they leave Year One. This is then reviewed again during the Autumn term in Year Two.

Phase Six - This begins in Year Two through SPAG in English lessons alongside any revision phase 5 phonics lessons. Children apply their phonic knowledge to recognise and spell complex words. They read increasing numbers of high frequency words independently and automatically. They also learn spelling conventions e.g. when using past tense, add suffixes - ended.

Please click this link for the ELS handbook

A Consistent Approach

Commitment to the 'Essential Letters and Sounds' programme is imperative. Everyone at Tolworth School follows the same programme, using the same terms and tracks progress in the same way to ensure pupils do not fall behind. Consistency is key; children are given a clear approach from all staff and year groups so that they retain learning and working memory is not overloaded. The following methods should be used.

Assessment

Formative assessment occurs in daily phonics sessions and children should be given appropriate challenge at the correct phonics level. Children are taught in a whole class approach. Interventions can happen swiftly during the apply section. Children who are falling behind are quickly identified and strategies put in place to ensure they catch up through extra ELS interventions.

Summative assessment using the 'Essential Letters and Sounds' assessment should be used every half term (usually during week 5) and this is used to inform planning and raise any concerns with senior leaders.

Decodable Books

Children practise early reading with fully decodable books that:

• are matched to phonic knowledge and which do not require use of alternative strategies.

• are closely matched to the phonics phases.

• are decodable at the child's current level and not mixed with non-decodable books for independent reading.

• include a small number of 'HRS' words which have been taught.

• are continued in the progressive sequence of 'Essential letters and sounds' phases until a child can

confidently decode words involving most common grapheme representations of all phonemes.

Book Corner

All classes have a high quality book corner with carefully chosen books – both fiction and non-fiction, and including plays, poems, books made by the children, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, atlases, etc… These areas should be well organised and inviting for the children. These books are introduced to the children and are read then re-read.